

with 684 / 1 / 40
6

19th February, 1940.

Memorandum to Chancery.

You may have seen the attached clipping and you may also have heard on the B.B.C. network that British Overseas Airways Corporation are to run a mail and express service across the Atlantic during the summer. Despite this, there is probably some truth in Talbert's statement that the Admiralty and the military side of the Air Ministry are exercising strong pressure on the civil side of the Air Ministry to have our long-range civil flying boats turned over to military uses. While I ought, strictly speaking, to support this policy, I feel it is my duty to remind you once again of the results of that policy, both now and after the war. At the present time, Pan American Airways are in undisputed command of the Atlantic and the Pacific civil airways. They are making the most of it and have no qualms about doing so. Quite apart therefore from the serious situation arising from the lack of any speedy means of written communication with Great Britain at this critical time and the general effect that our failure to operate a trans-Atlantic service has on our prestige in this country, we ought to keep in mind the difficulties with which we shall be confronted after the war is over when we want to recapture our due share of the trans-Atlantic air traffic. By then Pan American Airways, and possibly American Export Air Lines, will be well established, and people will be so accustomed to travelling by them and so confident in their reliability and safety of operation that they will be reluctant to travel by a new service lacking in experience of trans-Atlantic flying and probably with inferior passenger equipment (for I understand that all development of trans-Atlantic civil transport aircraft has ceased).

7
END

19th February, 1940

Memorandum to the Secretary of State

You may have seen the attached clipping

I suggest therefore that we ought to continue to impress on the Foreign Office the dangers inherent in the present situation and, while noting with satisfaction that a mail and express service is to be operated by the British Overseas Airways Corporation over the northern air route this summer, press very strongly that preparations be made without delay to continue the service next winter, either with landplanes over the northern route or with flying boats via Bermuda direct (and non stop) to Lisbon, and at the same time urge that the building of suitable trans-Atlantic civil transport aircraft be resumed.

G.C. Paine
A/A.

WASHINGTON, D.C.,
19th February, 1940.

I enclose you
for
21.2.

HE.

Draft
197
Feb. 27
L 21/2